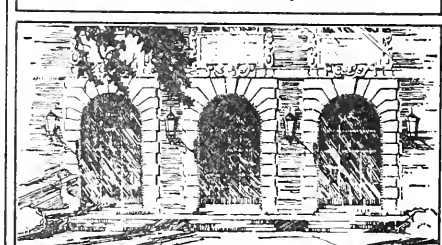


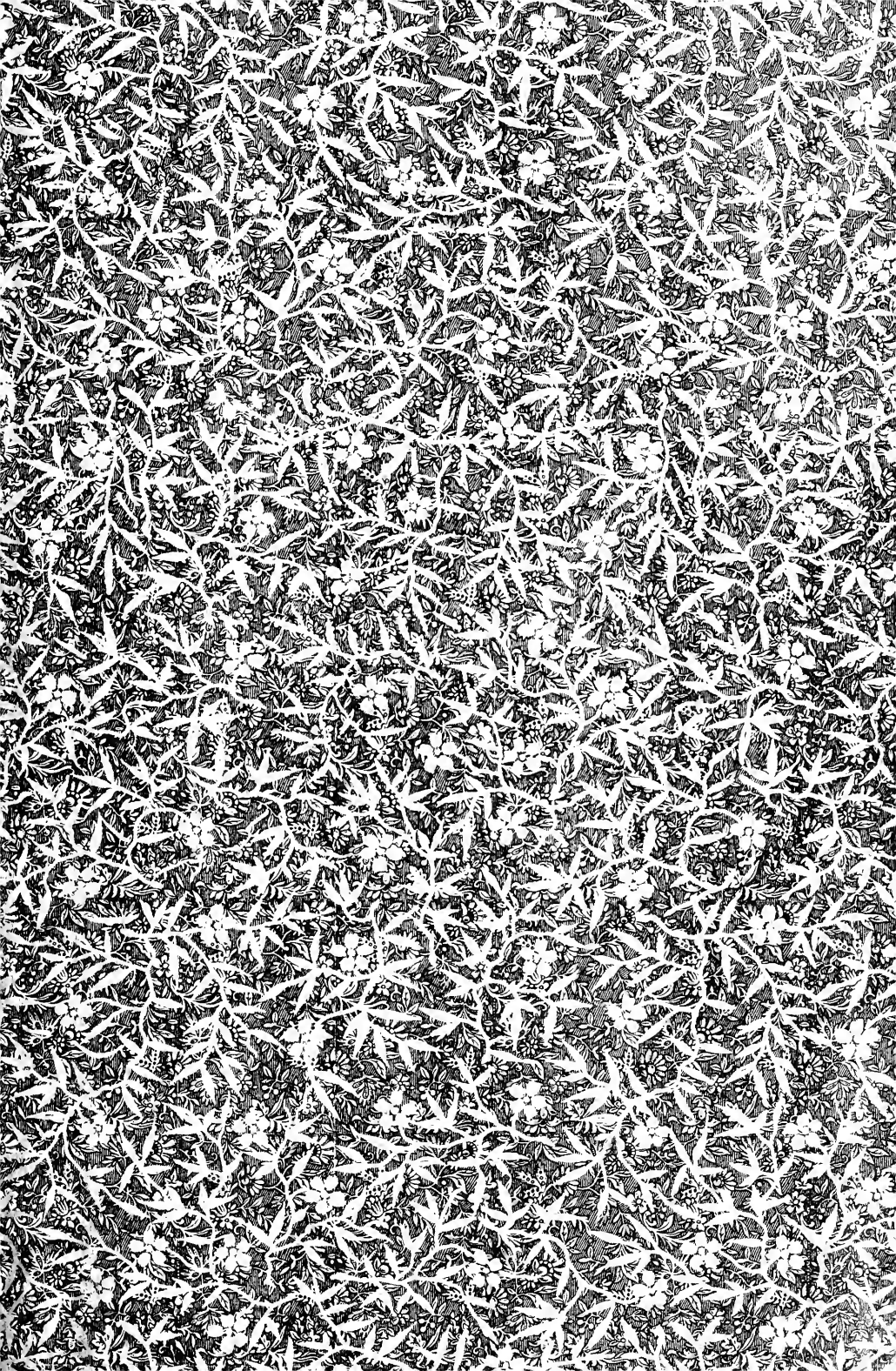


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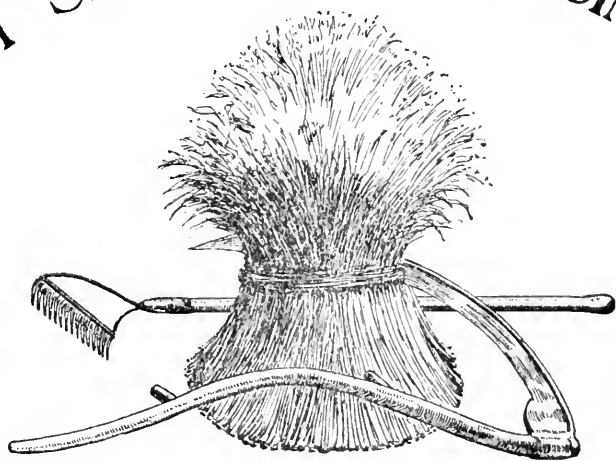
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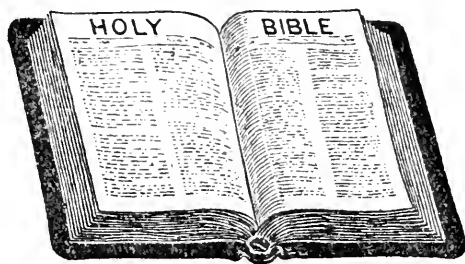


Ernest K. Wiley
(a granddaughter)
901 S. State
Champaign Illinois

NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS



FERVENT IN SPIRIT



SERVING THE LORD



J. B. Comer

“There is nothing higher than to approach nearer Deity than other men, and from such proximity to spread the rays of Divine light among the human race.”

Dedication

TO MY SAINTED SISTER, CLARA, MY TWO SURVIVING SISTERS, ROSA C.
WILEY AND EFFIE C. NELSON; TO MY FIVE BROTHERS, REV. J. M.
CROMER, JOHN BIRT CROMER, RICHARD L. CROMER, PROF. E. P.
CROMER AND REV. G. C. CROMER, WHO ARE ALL ONE IN
THEIR APPRECIATION OF OUR FATHER, AND TO MOTHER
WHOSE FAITHFUL DISCHARGE OF A MOTHER'S
DUTIES IN RAISING A LARGE FAMILY IS CHER-
ISHED, AND TO WHOM THIS BOOK
WILL BE A SATISFACTION AND
COMFORT IN HER BEREAVE-
MENT AND LONELINESS OF
LIFE, THIS MEMORIAL
IS AFFECTION-
ATELY DED-
ICATED

—E. C. L.

Preface.

This memorial, composed of tributes from several of the children and friends of the subject of this booklet, is the tablet we would inscribe to his memory. It is a handful of flowers we have gathered from the garden of his influence, and placed in this permanent form that we might perpetuate the inspiration of such a life. We love to strew these flowers in honor of him, and that the aroma may be wafted down to succeeding generations, a blessing and benediction to his posterity and all who may read.—
E. C. L.

“And many a private soldier,
 Who walks his humble way,
With no sounding name or title,
 Unknown to the world today,
In the eyes of God is a hero
 As worthy of the bays,
As any mighty general
 To whom the world gives praise.”

Tribute to the Life and Memory

...of...

Rev. J. B. Cromer

BY M. RHODES, D. D.

Nothing is truer in the history of human life than that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth," but rather in the quality of the elements which make up his character. The highest attainment lies in the possession of the Kingdom of God, and the apostle says, "The Kingdom of God is in You." It is not a thing of observation and display. It needs that no more than the sunflower needs a banner to tell us what and where they are. "The Kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." This truth was illustrated in the life and character of the subject of this sketch. I have known few men whose subjective life was so well based and so manifest in his influence and example without. With good native gifts, but without any of the advantages of a later generation, Bro. Cromer was not a learned man, he did not claim to be, but of that knowledge which is supreme, he possessed an unusual measure. A man's real power among men is largely in proportion to his familiarity with the "powers of the world to come." Our brother knew little of the knowledge obtained in the schools, but much of that which is obtained in the school of Christ. It pleased God to reveal himself to him out of those treasures of wisdom with which the Divine Spirit deals, and we have through Jesus Christ.

And this is only another way of saying that Brother Cromer was a man of a meek and humble spirit, no one knew his limitations so well as he knew it. While always ready to serve his Lord, it was not in him to seek position, nor to covet the opportunity and service appointed to others, and yet no one among us commanded and was worthy of greater respect. He was again an illustration of God's way—"I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit."

It is inevitable that in such a man an unmistakable fervor should be manifest. Whether in his prayers, preaching or conversation this impressive quality was realized. His preaching was not intended to lead the hearer to mark any feat of rhetoric or oratory, labored reasoning, or any other evidence of human skill, but those who took heed to the hearing could not fail to feel that it was in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. And this is the preaching to which men listen and upon whose hearts and lives it makes lasting impression.

Our brother's ministry never brought him the fame of the world, and of self sacrifice it was full from the beginning to the end, but it was owned of God and will be retained in the heart and memory of young and old for a long time to come.

Brother Cromer's piety stood the severe test of domestic life. What he was in the home, he was abroad, the man of God as a husband and father, as a citizen, and as a minister of the Gospel. He knew but one life for all places—it was the life of Christ. God honored him in his

home. For more than fifty years he lived with the devoted wife of his youth. He gave two sons to the holy ministry, while other sons and daughters adorn the home and make good proof of more than ordinary gifts. So the toiling, quiet, obscure, but from the highest point of view, beautiful life, was lived. The going down of the sun was not marred by any regrets or self reproach, nor by any displeasure of God. This man fought a good fight, kept the faith, and his going was an ascension to be with Christ which is far better.

As I write the memory of his life and friendship comes to me as a beatitude. I could easily go on, but no tribute could express so much, as none is so fitting as that which comes to us out of the Heavens—"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, for their works follow with them."—

St. Louis, Mo.



In Memoriam.

Rev. J. B. Cromer.

For the Lutheran Observer: The Rev. J. B. Cromer, one of the oldest and highly esteemed members of the Synod of Central and Southern Illinois, was called to his reward at his home near Irving, Ills., on Friday, August 26th, in the 74th year of his age.

For more than a quarter of a century I have known and loved this humble and most worthy servant of God. Only a few months ago it was the writer's privilege to participate with his children and many friends in the observance of the golden wedding in his home. For fifty years he and his had walked together in blessed fellowship. The occasion was a joyous one, but from beginning to end it was a recognition of God's leading and goodness. Beginning in the home, it continued and ended in the house of God.

When brother Cromer was 33 years' old, he quit the anvil for the pulpit. He was licensed by the Synod of Northern Indiana in 1860. He came to Irving, Ills., in 1861, where he continued serving the church in the village and the country round about. For the last few years he has not been in the active work of the ministry.

His diary contains the following record: "I wept and prayed God to send someone else to preach. I had no education, was slow of speech; I was poor, and had no library only the Bible, Webster's Unabridged Dictionary,

Barnes' Notes on the New Testament, and an Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge. My best commentary was the Holy Spirit."

This not only reveals the material limitations, but the character of the man. His natural gifts were more than ordinary, and his consecration and devoutness unquestioned. Like Barnabas, he was a good man, full of faith and the Holy Ghost, and through his instrumentality many people were added to the Lord. He was a humble, obscure minister; he had no part in the blare of the world's trumpets, but I have a feeling that he will take his place above many who were supposed to surpass him here. There were some things he could not, would not attempt to do, but he was mighty in the knowledge of the Scriptures and in prayer. Beyond his knowing he impressed, and was a blessing to the writer and to many who knew him. A great company along with the widow and the eight children who survive him, will revere and be helped by his memory. Two of his sons, Rev. J. M. Cromer, of Kansas City, Mo., and Rev. Geo. C. Cromer, of Emporia, Kans., are worthy ministers in the Lutheran church.

His son, Rev. J. M. Cromer, pays this deserved tribute to his father: "My father was not a perfect man. But a more Godly man I have never had the pleasure of knowing. His devotion to his Bible, his faithful discharge of religious worship in the house, his unflinching example in the home and community as a true Christian and patriot, and his progressive spirit in temperance and other reforms, mark him not only as a man of God, but as a man of original and independent character. Though an

uneducated man as men count education, still he was learned in the things of the Spirit, and as a thinker he was not only original, but of no mean ability. His one passion was the crucified Saviour. This was the sum of his theology and the substance of his preaching."

After an address by the writer, he was laid to his rest on Saturday afternoon, to "wait for the Lord Jesus, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able to subject all things unto himself."

M. RHODES.

St. Louis, Mo.



Eldest Son's Tribute.

"He is truly great that is little in himself, and that maketh no account of any height of honor."—*Thomas A. Kemper.*

No truer words could be spoken of my father. His highest ambition was the simple privilege of preaching the gospel. He was a man of strong and deep religious propensities and experience. He had a powerful emotional nature, and his soul was aflame with zeal for the souls of men. It would seem impossible for a man to be more devoted to his calling.

Having labored at the blacksmith's anvil until in his thirties, I can remember him laboring night after night with old Pinneo's grammar, that he might correct his language. I remember his first installment of religious books, and no seminary ever had a more faithful student.

But best of all he knew his Bible which he had read daily from boyhood. In his own simple methods he had caught the true drift of the divine economy, and hence his unaided interpretation were truly scriptural. Though ignorant of the original languages he had so absorbed the mind of his Master that he knew the meaning of what He said.

Much like Bunyan, he talked and thought after scripture models and terminology. And his preaching was reinforced at every point with the "thus saith the Lord," which his strong faith never questioned.

He was converted when a mere boy, and knew what experimental religion was. His life, while not without its human frailties, stood for all that was best in the best character. Deeply conscientious, nothing more humbled him than to find he had been wrong, when he could not wait for an opportunity to confess it.

He gave himself literally a whole sacrifice to the gospel ministry. The swamps and over-flowed streams of Indiana were often a cause of deep anxiety to his family, when he was out on one of his large circuits. For he was a real Lutheran "circuit rider." I can remember his buying a horse. But before buying him he had a boy ride him into deep water to see if the horse could swim, and if he swam high or low in the water. And many times did he swim old "Fike" across the swollen streams, he kneeling in the saddle.

He was a man of whom it may truly be said his age was scarcely worthy. And yet he has left behind him in every community in which he lived a testimony which the greatest and best might covet. Rigid and severe as a disciplinarian, he was as tender hearted as a child in his devotion to his family. He was an uncompromising foe to all forms of sin, and stood out for the highest ideal of life. But I would fail to do my duty did I not in this place acknowledge my own dependence upon him and his inestimable help to me in the work of the ministry. How often when struggling to build up a strong church in a large, wild and western city, his letters came as a strong tonic to soul and spirit. And, oh, how he plead with me to "*preach the gospel*," and not be led astray by the cold

intellectual preaching of the times. Those letters were as truly epistles to my soul as were Paul's to Timothy, and they were as true to the cross and its bleeding Saviour. How many times I spent alone in my study reading those letters, and then in silence plead with God to help me.

And it was one of the sweetest pleasures of my whole life, and now a sweetest memory, that his own blessed voice preached the first sermon in the new basement of the First Lutheran church of Kansas City, Missouri, and that this same voice, all mellowed with emotion, offered the first prayer in the finished auditorium five years later, while tears of joy and thanksgiving freely flowed down his face. That sermon and that prayer consecrated that building above all else to my soul.

I thank my God for my now sainted father, and for her who all along a pilgrimage of over fifty years of hardest toil and privation was his help-meet, my dear mother, who abides with us the longer that she may enjoy a little of her hard earned rest before she joins him she loved most in his heavenly mansions. May God grant that as the links fall out of the family chain on earth, they may be formed in heaven, so that at last we may form an unbroken band around that great white throne about which he so often preached and prayed and sang—

"There is a world above,
Where parting is unknown:—
A whole eternity of love
Found for the good alone:
And faith beholds the dying here
Translated to that happier sphere."

—*Montgomery.*

How often my father sang in his family worship—

“Oh, heaven, sweet heaven,
Dear heaven of the blest.
How I long to be there
And its glory to share.
And to lean on my Saviour's breast.”

Thank God he is now with his God and Saviour in
heaven.

JAMES MONROE CROMER.

Kansas City, Mo.



The Soul's Immortal

[In Memory of My Sainted Father, Rev. J. B. Cromer.]

The soul's immortal—can'st thou doubt?
Hast thou e'er lost a loved one?
Does not his presence seem about
More than before his course was run?

Think you that dear one is no more,
Whose voice you hear now as of old.
In song that rings out as before,
In dream or by the memory told?

Think you, that hand, so hard and free,
Its labors wrought for time alone?
Its deeds tell through eternity,
They speak on now as from above.

And what! That kind and soul-lit face!
Shall it e'er cease, in thought to move
Emotions, we would not erase?
The soul's immortal, we would prove.

That form, though bent and worn by toil,
The dearest seems of all beside.
To work and pray through life's turmoil—
His joy, that nothing could betide.

That form, it seems I see it now
Move by in slow and solemn tread,
A Patriarch true, with noble brow,
It cannot be that he is dead!

Does he not live, in whose own soul
The things eternal had such hold,
Who cared not for the billow's roll,
If for the truth he might be bold?

The word, the truth, eternal life
Were themes that were most dear to him.
Who now must dwell midst blessings rife
Where there's no toil nor pain, nor sin;
But where the soul will e'er unfold
On through the endless worlds of light,
For truth and love are ever told
Where dwells the Lord and angels bright.
And could it be that such a life.
Here lived, midst all the sin and woe,
Would cease to grow, where there's no strife,
No more of truth, of love to know?
Ah, no! It cannot be. That land's
A land of e'er increasing lore;
And when we've run well here time's sands
We'll live and learn forever more.

EMMA CROMER LADD.

April 12th, 1902.

Sheldon, Iowa.



A Filial Tribute.

[In Memory of My Sainted Father, the REV. J. B. CROMER.]

For others, he lived and wrought;
For the truth, he stood and fought;
For Christ and the church, he gave;
'Til he reached his honored grave.

The child of his old age, I humbly pay this tribute to him who gave me not only this physical life but also together with my christian mother, the principles and example of the spiritual life without which no man can truly live.

It is with something of a moral compulsion that I undertake this task; not that I do not esteem it a pleasure and an honor thus to render tribute to whom tribute is due, but in view of the noble life of my father I feel that I must do it. If I should allow a life like his to pass by unnoticed, unwritten and unsung, it seems to me that the old house in which I was born, the family altar which my father never neglected and the now silent voices of the scores of souls which he was the means of saving for eternity would all break forth in rebuking my ingratitude.

What I have to say shall be based upon my personal knowledge of and companionship with my father for the last thirty years of his life, the verbal testimony of my dear mother who survives him, the testimony of many friends and one time enemies and whatever of folk-lore and family traditions I may be able to bring into requisition. To be chronological and to give my humble essay the dignity which the heroic life of my father is truly wor-

thy, I shall arrange my material in chapters as follows:
Youth, Manhood and Old Age.

CHAPTER I.

Youth Rev. J. B. Cromer, or as he was wont to write his name, "John Basor Cromer," was a twin brother of Josiah Cromer—a well-to-do farmer and patriarch of Central Indiana—the seventh in the order of birth of a Pennsylvania family of eleven children. He first saw the light in a large stone house near Mercersburg, Franklin county, Pennsylvania. While a student in the Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, I visited this homestead. As I stood in the room where my father was born, as I climbed the hill where he used to coast on his self built sled, as I crossed the creek where he skated, as I entered the shed where he milked the cows, as I walked silently through the field where in penitential prayer he sought forgiveness of sin and the way of Life; I prayed God to make me worthy his simple, pure and consecrated life. I also prayed that as the mantle of Elijah fell upon Elisha so might the mantle of my father fall upon me, bearing with it the authority and power of one of God's faithful ministers.

It was on the summer day of July 11, 1825, that the neighboring farmers heard the news from the Jordan mansion that to George and Mary Cromer was born a pair of bouncing twins. To the one the parents gave the name, Josiah, and the other they named John. The twins grew and waxed strong in years. John early gained the distinction of being the best all round athlete among the boys. That is saying a great deal for there were seven

of them and all were hardy mountaineers. Especially in running and jumping my father excelled. Upon the evidence of his own testimony (which no one ever questioned) he could clear thirty-three feet at three consecutive standing jumps. Of this distinction my father was justly proud.

At the reunion of the Cromer family in 1876 when the parents were past eighty years of age and sight and hearing were somewhat dull, it was with difficulty that grandfather and grandmother recognized their children now men and women. With an ear trumpet grandfather listened to the introduction of each one in the order of age. When it came my father's turn the speaker said, "This is John." My grandfather shook his head. Again the speaker gave the name but again grandfather shook his head. After remaining in silence for a time grandfather's face broke forth in smiles and he lifted his voice in his accustomed forcefulness, "Oh, John! John, the race-horse!" Grandfather remembered my father by his athletic achievements. My father told me that it was his duty at home when any of the children became unruly and deserved chastisement, to run, catch the escaping criminal and bring him to judgment. The deputy sheriff often had to pay dearly for the honor of his office, however, as the offender would struggle violently to "go scot free."

The physical strength and endurance gained by my father's early life of temperance and exercise came to his help in many of the stern battles of life. He always hated the practices of chewing tobacco and drinking liquor. There was born in him this antagonism which never died till the last day of his life. No wonder he could run well the race

of life and battle so valiantly against sin. He never stained his lips or poisoned his breath or weakened his frame by the life sapping weed. He never staggered beneath the blow of King Alcohol. But God gave him many opportunities to deal deadly blows to both these enemies of the physical, mental and spiritual natures.

School privileges were not the best in those days. John reached and mastered the "Rule of Three" under the tutorship of the district master. But the religious training was more thorough and although he took delight in his books he showed a special interest in the Bible from his earliest youth. This, he often called his text book. It would be well if the doctors of divinity in our time had the knowledge of the Bible which my father gained and used by his individual efforts. He walked several miles to take catechetical instruction in the Reformed church under the direction of one, Rev. Amos Kramer. In due time he was confirmed by Rev. McCholly. He was true to his religious vows and most aggressive in his Master's service. From the time of his confirmation he began practical personal work for the salvation of souls. But for many years he did not feel divinely called or qualified to preach. At seventeen years of age he left home to learn the trade of blacksmith. Now began the trial of life. He was a home boy and often after a day of hard labor would weep himself to sleep. He was only about four miles from father and mother, sisters and brothers, but it was away from home. God pity and help the young man or young woman away from the protecting care of the home. Peter Kunkleman, "a Lutheran dyed in the wool," as my father

called him taught him the trade. He must have taught well and the apprentice must have been very apt and industrious, for my father became a skilled mechanic in wood and iron. I played for many years with a wagon which my father had made for my oldest brothers and sisters who were twenty years my seniors. During my labor on the farm with my father we made use of a Minneapolis twine binder which by keeping in repair, served its purpose for twelve years. In that time I believe I lost or broke every separate part of that machine but the master-wheel. But my father was always ready for the emergency. One time when I came from the field minus a vital part of the Appleby knotter and the acres of ripened grain stood waiting the sickle, having never seen so intricate and mysterious a piece of mechanism, my father seemed non-plussed. But when I told him the office of the missing part he conceived its nature and form and forthwith constructed it out of a piece of shapeless steel, put it in its place and the binder worked as good as ever. *Thoroughness* and faithfulness together with a characteristic honesty were elements in his character which in early life manifested themselves and gave prophecy of the after life which was to follow.

It would be dishonest as well as unhistorical if I failed to mention the weak points of my father's character. Be it said to his everlasting praise, however, that from all the information I can gain from both his friends and his enemies no stain ever left a mark upon his moral character. But he was passionate. He was not above anger yet I have always observed the faithfulness with which he ob-

served the biblical injunction, "Be ye angry and sin not." When misfortune and perplexity and crosses came upon him in such number and power as to threaten his christian fortitude, I have seen him maintain his silence for days at a time. Not a word escaped from his lips but the reading of the Scriptures and the morning prayer until his better spirit gained the victory.

As a boy, he was not above the fun and tricks common to boys of that time and place. He had no scruples to restrain him from tying his sled to the tail of a wild steer, causing the poor animal to run itself into a spell of palpitation of the heart before John's appetite for sleigh rides was satiated. One time this procedure cost him almost the loss of his life. The rope was securely fastened to the caudicle appendage of the bovine, when lo! the frightened steer took a straight course for the creek which was slightly frozen over with a skim of ice. Down went steer, sled and boy. A brother came to the rescue. The life of a good man was spared.

Before closing this introductory chapter, let me say that obedience to parents was one of my father's virtues. He sometimes needed the chastening rod. Many episodes in which straps, slippers and birches figured conspicuously have been related to me both by father and uncles. But he was an obedient boy. He kept the Fourth commandment from his youth. He did not talk back to father or mother. Their word was law. I believe that the long life and rich experience of declining years came to him in fulfillment of the divine promise set forth in that Fourth

commandment; for he came to his grave in a good old age like a shock of corn cometh in his season.

"He that soweth good seed shall surely reap;
The year grows rich as it groweth old,
And Life's latest sands are its sands of gold."

—Dorr.

CHAPTER II.

Manhood This period of my father's life may be said to begin in 1845, just as he was reaching his majority. I would call it the roving period of his life. He had no books and but little education yet he wanted to see something of the world. He used his trade as the means of providing for this expensive sort of schooling. The great west had attractions for him. Spending less than a year in each of the following cities—Xenia, Ohio; Germantown, Indiana; Canton, Illinois and Peoria, Illinois he returned to Maryland near his old home, where he met again a black haired maiden who had been the charm of his early youth. Her name was Catherine Hedrick who, according to the laws of love and of the state, became his wife January 7, 1847. The young couple determined to make their new home in the west. A little town then named Columbus in the state of Indiana was chosen as the starting place. It was very wicked and in my father's diary is designated as "The Devil's Half Acre." Here my parents lived for thirteen years earning an honest living for themselves and their growing family, battling against sin and building up the church. Here my father identified himself with the Lutheran church. There being no church building, meetings were held in

the back end of a blacksmith shop. He never missed the prayer meetings here. He would come, if alone, light the lamp, sing, read the scriptures and pray aloud for the salvation of the wicked community. Here he felt the call to preach the gospel but entered upon the task with reluctance. "For weeks," he wrote, "I wept and prayed God to send someone else, as I had no education and was slow of speech. I cannot describe my feelings as I tried to talk to the people. I had no library but the bible, Webster's dictionary, a small encyclopaedia of religious knowledge and Barnes' Notes on the New Testament. The bible was my grammar, my astronomy and best commentary. My daily prayer was for wisdom and understanding of the Word. My best guide was the Holy Spirit." We do not wonder that Olive Branch Synod licensed him to preach and that success everywhere crowned his labor. He was a reformer as well as a preacher. Together with friends he succeeded in driving out of the town the five saloons, gambling dens and places of vice, and erecting in their stead two churches. At Charlottsville, Carthage and Bok's Mill he preached and carried on pastoral labor, often working at his trade all week and riding seventy-two miles to his preaching appointment. The riding was not in a Pullman palace car but upon the back of a poorly saddled horse. In this community he built two churches.

The Church of Christ will never fail while served by such men. When he prayed you could catch the note of expectancy in every sentence. He prayed as if he was sure of an early answer. He built his hopes and laid his plans upon prayer and in this he was never disappointed.

This strong faith in God gave him strength among men. He was absolutely fearless among men. Early in the sixties he was called to preach at Irving and Bost Hill, Illinois. He answered the call. War clouds were gathering. My father was not a politician, but he was a loyal patriot. The storm of the Rebellion broke upon our country—the most suicidal war in the history of the world. My father believed that the Union ought to be preserved. He prayed and preached for the preservation of the United States. But alas! His church members were mostly secessionists of the most sanguine type. They tried to intimidate him in every possible manner. Irresponsible individuals and parties resorted to Satanic measures to stop his ministry, but all failed. At Bost Hill it was no uncommon thing for a log to rise upon its end and come crashing against the side of the frame church building during the religious service.

The writer began his ministry at this same place over thirty years later. Men who were participants in the following incidents are responsible for their authenticity. One time a band of stalwart young men by the title of "Star Knockers" came stalking into the church rattling their spurs and brandishing their pistols while my father was preaching. He paused to ask the young men kindly to keep the peace. He told them that they were in church and were expected to behave themselves as gentlemen, closing his remarks with a dramatic appeal to the bible as authority for his being in command of his position. Whereupon the leader of the band drew his pistol and fired it in the church, the missile tearing its way

through the wall causing great consternation. My father left the pulpit at once and caught the young man firmly by both arms, shook him violently and settled him down into the pew with considerable force, adding with emphasis, "Boy, you are in the house of God and you must behave." He and his companions behaved. It was some time until violence was again threatened. But that time came.

A large following of back-woodsmen joined themselves to the "Star Knockers" for the purpose of giving the brave preacher a coat of tar and feathers. One bright Sunday morning as the preacher came driving down the road he found a host of men lined up on each side the road waiting for him. He suspected their purpose but did not hesitate or turn aside. Straight down between the two lines of ruffians he rode bidding a happy good morning to right and to left and no man laid hands on him. They had not the courage to attack the innocent and unarmed man. Through all the war he preached with greatest boldness the truth as he conceived it, incensing enemies yet he never carried a weapon upon his person and many of those enemies lived to become friends, "to call him blessed."

In this very neighborhood where he experienced the greatest difficulties in his ministry his name is a household treasure. Throughout the vicinity of Filmore and Bost Hill during his declining years—the two last decades of his life—he conducted nearly all the baptisms, marriages and funerals. Here he held many revival meetings and did much house to house visiting. He talked to the men

in the field and the women at their housework about their souls. Many of them have told me that my father was the means of their souls' salvation. For a month or more he would continue these meetings without any recompense other than the joy of winning souls to Christ.

After the war he preached at Nokomis, Ill., in a school house, built a church about seven miles west of that city, called Mt. Zion, serving also the charge at St. Johns, six miles to the south of Mt. Zion. In 1876 he moved to Carthage, Ill., in order to give his children an education in the Lutheran college there. He served a church at Fountain Green, twelve miles east of Carthage, and one at West Point, about that distance south of Carthage. But the financial support was not sufficient to meet his expenses at Carthage, so after a year he left part of the children in college to work out their own salvation and took the younger members of the family down to West Point. Here we lived a year when my father was called back to the old church at Irving where he preached for several years partially supporting his family by working at his trade and on the farm.

Bost Hill and Filmore were in the charge at this time with Irving and my father had the joy of ministering to the spiritual wants of those one-time enemies. This brings us to the period of his life which we call Old Age and further comment will be made on the events of this period in the last chapter.

Before passing to that chapter let me allude to a few points of interest in his character which properly belong

to the period of manhood, yet with him continued through life.

Industry characterized his whole life. Father was a hard working man. He had a large family and always a small salary. Many problems faced our parents in their journey of life but the one of "making ends meet" was among the most difficult. He knew what it meant as a valiant soldier of Christ to fight with one hand the "good fight of faith," and with the other hand to drive back the "wolf from the door."

Misfortune, loss, treachery of men of the world and poor business management on his own part together with extreme liberality kept my father close to the wall financially. But he worked. He was not happy unless busy. To him idleness was a sin. During part of his life he lived on a small farm where the children and busy mother helped to solve the difficult problems. But our farming often reminded me of the experiences of the family of Robert Burns while in that pursuit. But my father was busy. On rainy days when he could not go afield he would work in the shop or in his study. A plow or a sermon were always in the process of making. No work was too hard for him. Mattock in hand he started for the branch where, under his strong arm, the knotted roots of willow and osage and crab apple fell asunder. For a long time a large locust tree was an eye-sore to my father and a nuisance to the beautiful and fertile field it cumbered. With the help of one of the boys my father digged the unfruitful tree out by its roots and burned it root and branch.

The anvil and carpenter's bench and shovel and axe, if allowed to speak, could tell you better than I the story of my father's industry. The pen also would have a volume to write. Many a sermon did my father print in full. Not only plain to read, but an ornament of grace are those pages. He abhorred slovenliness in every form. Four of his children completed collegiate courses of education. One of them continued to be careless in penmanship. My father thought the education of that child was a failure for this simple reason what he thought worthy of doing at all he thought worthy of doing rightly.

Let me also speak of his honesty. He would rather have gone to his grave a pauper than to have done a thing that had even the semblance of dishonesty. If I may be allowed to venture a criticism upon the life of so good a man I would say that he was honest and ignored worldly things to a fault. His honesty took upon itself the form of injustice to himself. If the trader with whom he dealt did not receive the best of the bargain my father thought it a sin. He loved other better than self. He was unfair to himself. "What will you take for those hogs?" said a butcher to my father when a pen of nicely fattened shoats was the question at issue. "Oh!" responded my father, "You just take them along and give me what you think is right." He thought every man as honest as himself, and to his own loss and to the woe of his family it often happened that in this judgment my father was sadly mistaken.

Benevolence was marked on his very face. If you

ever saw him; there is no need of comment here. He would give away the last morsel of bread in the house to a tramp.

I have often been sent to town with barrels of apples, bushels of potatoes, hams, corn, chickens, etc., to be given to widows, orphans and poor preachers. No beggar was ever turned away from our door empty. My father was not satisfied with giving the poor tramp a meal, but would sit down beside him while he was eating it and enter into the deepest sympathy with the unfortunate man whose story was always accredited as genuine history by my father.

It goes without saying that the good nature of my father was often imposed upon by those less scrupulous than himself. His team of faithful horses given to help a neighbor in time of need, came home gaunt, galled and broken down. His new tools, always kept in the best repair, came home from the borrower dull and broken. Deceived by a *quondam* friend, now an agent, that he was signing a guarantee, he is soon confronted with the stern proposition that he had signed a note and he had to pay it. In silence my father bore the greatest wrongs. He would fight, but not for himself. Let the weak or down trodden or helpless be imposed upon and he would rise as a lion with a roar and with the strength of this king of the forest would quite vanquish the enemy.

Every man has had his peculiarities. My father was not eccentric but his peculiarities were very striking. He had his own way of doing everything. His standard was his idea of what was right, and it did not make a particle of difference to him what other people thought or said or

did. So long as he thought he was on the right track, on he went. He was conscious but not boastful of his ingenuity. Other plows might suit the neighbors, but in his own field no plow turned the earth quite so thoroughly as the one of his own invention and that came from off his own forge. He never had a bookcase that would supply his need until one grew up from the top of his carpenter's bench. He had used many farm wagons but none were so strong and durable, and at the same time, "light running" as the one he made *in totum*.

He made a buggy from start to finish and he was not so comfortable in a railway palace car as in that buggy when traveling. He planted his potatoes three in a hill and crow-foot fashion. He paid no attention to the signs of the moon. In his dress he sought comfort rather than looks, yet when he had to appear in public he was fixy to the point of fastidiousness. While walking and in meditation he carried his cane like an umbrella, only wrong end up.

He was one of the most remarkable conversationalists to whom I have ever listened. Though uneducated in the schools he read the papers, kept abreast the times and could engage the talent of leading men of culture and thought on any question of the day. He looked on truth from all sides and was broad minded on every subject that had two sides to it. He was open to conviction, but could only be won by proofs from holy writ and many infallible arguments. In his preaching he used the method of illustration and clinched every argument set forth by a strong scriptural text. His chief delight was in working with the

children. His songs for children and children's meetings have immortalized his name in every congregation he served.

My father had good blood in his veins. So far as I am able to trace our ancestry there are no lords, dukes, counts or kings in the line. Grandfather Cromer was a Pennsylvania Dutchman of the truest type. He was a valiant soldier of Christ in the noble ranks of layman. Old residents about Fort Loudon remember him as the man who drove the Mormons out of their neighborhood in the early days of Mormonism. The rude, untaught, but virtuous farmer could see through the veil of hypocrisy the rottenness of polygamy and when the great prophet Lorenzo Snow came down into the water of that little creek near Bridgeport to immerse one of George Cromer's daughters, together with a number of guileless youth of that community, grandfather rode down the stream on his dashing saddlehorse Rock, brandishing his cattle-whip and shouting defiance to the proselyting Mormons. There were no baptisms that day. The daughter lived to thank her sturdy father for what he had done, not only for her but for the company of youth, who, on that memorable day, were "Saved At Last From Among the Mormons."

Grandmother Cromer was of pure German descent, coming from a Teutonic family by the name of Rummel, which migrated in the early history of our country to Lancaster county, Pennsylvania. Father often spoke of his mother's character and cooking in highest praise.

There was no blue blood in my father's veins. It was

all red—red with sincerity—red with the crimson, the stream that flowed from Calvary's cross. We have the honor of descending from a long line of christian ancestors. What is the family of Tudors or the house of Hapsburg compared with the household of God? I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. We are indebted to our fathers for a heritage of christian character which is worth more to us than the millions of Rothchilds, the acres of the English manors or the titles of the Stuarts.

My father belonged to the aristocracy of horny hands; he graduated at Anvil College, but received his diploma from the Great Teacher and now wears the crown of eternal life.

CHAPTER III.

Old Age Beginning with the year 1884 we may count the events in my father's life as belonging to the period of old age. Though his health and natural strength remained unabated and almost two decades of his life were yet before him full of promise, he was past the half century mark and going down the hill on the other side of life.

About this time he was called to become pastor of the Ware's Grove Lutheran church two miles north of the village of Butler, Montgomery county, Illinois. Here was a settlement of excellent New England people, intelligent, progressive, virtuous and loyal to the pastors who preached in the little church on the hill. My father served this charge with the greatest of acceptance for ten years. It

was in that little church that the writer preached his first sermon on the first Sunday in July, 1894, and there is no place in our dear Master's Vineyard where we would prefer closing our ministerial life than right there among the friends of our youth in that beautiful grove on the hill where, after many years of service father laid his armor down.

Here my father began to preach Prohibition. Not that he ceased preaching Christ and Him crucified, for that was the theme of every sermon, but that he reached a point in his religious experience where he could vote as he prayed and preach as he voted. His religion was henceforth no longer divorced from his politics. Like the patriarchs of old his politics and his religion were identical. If a man's religion and his politics are out of harmony there is certainly something diabolically wrong with his religion or his politics. John Basor Cromer voted for the first prohibition president that ran for office and he voted the prohibition ticket straight till the time of his death. He often said that he would vote that ticket if there was not another man in the country who had the courage to vote it with him.

His parishoners listened to his lectures and his sermons with the greatest of respect. They could not do otherwise for the evident honesty and sincerity of his messages would command respect anywhere. His preaching soon bore its fruit. One of his hearers had been managing a cider mill not far from the church, where the juice of the apples sometimes fermented and made men drunken. One Monday morning while the sermon of the yes-

terday was ringing in his ears this hearer took my father out of doors and said, "Do you see that cider mill yonder?" "Yes," said my father. "Well," continued the hearer, "No more cider shall come from that mill." And it was so. I can testify to the fact that the hearer was converted into a prohibitionist and the cider mill was converted into a saw mill. Some preachers have had the power to convert men but my father could convert men, their purses and all their machinery.

In the political campaigns my father never took the stump. His name was on the prohibition ticket for congressman several times but he took it as sort of a joke. He knew there was no danger of being elected. Party amounted to nothing in his ideas of statesmanship. It was principle—only principle. He was often called upon to address Republican and Democratic audiences, which he did with much pleasure for it offered him another opportunity to preach the truth. I tell you my father was an ardent prohibitionist. And you dare not say this ardor was fanaticism. It came not with the vagaries of youth. It was the result of mature judgment and of a ripened old age. To him the liquor traffic was a monster serpent winding its way around the church, the home, the state and society. It was an enemy that could not be compromised with. He gave it no quarter. He armed himself with facts and statistics and the sword of the Spirit and pounced upon his enemy with unrelenting zeal. There was one class of people upon whom he had no mercy and that was the church members who catered to the wishes of the Rum Gorgon. With Cato-like-tenacity to his sub-

ject he closed every discourse on whatever subject with the declaration implied if not uttered, "The liquor traffic must be destroyed."

His motives in the strong campaign he waged against the liquor traffic were of the purest and most unselfish type. So far as I know none of his children or near kin ever fell victims to the power of this enemy. But my father saw that the enemy was bringing woe and ruin upon others and for these defenseless others my father fought to kill. There is no figure of speech in these terms. As Paul fought the beasts at Ephesus my father fought the liquor traffic in Indiana and Illinois. He gave no heed to what that fight cost him. Did his business suffer? Was his good name assailed? Did men withhold his salary? Were his brethren in the ministry chagrined at the conduct which his extremely positive position on this question demanded? It mattered not. My father was sure he was right and went ahead. Let us pray God for more of such men of courage to help us save our country from the curse that buried Nineveh, Babylon and Rome.

We lived on the little farm one mile and a half north-east of Irving, Illinois, during the period of my father's old age. For every summer of the last twenty years of father's life except one the writer labored together with him in the field, in the shop and in the church. It is not in the spirit of boasting when we say that we knew more of father during these years than did any of the other children in the family. Being a child of his old age and the last one to leave the parental roof for a home of his

own I claim the right to speak with authority on this most important period. It was during these years that my father came nearest realizing one of his fondest ambitions—getting out of debt. Like a black cloud, a mortgage had been hanging over the little home. How hard we worked no one can know. Oh, the droughts and freshets and blight and mildew and accidents and false friends and hailstorms and grasshoppers and locusts and chinch bugs and weeds and broken down horses and sickness! Time would fail me to speak of the difficulties in our way “to pay our honest debts,” as my father expressed it. We had the joy of reducing the mortgage to \$750.00 at one time and canceling all floating indebtedness; but again misfortune came. By the help of some of the children the interest on the mortgage note was kept paid so that the homestead was saved and a small dowry was provided for our mother.

It is well to mention here that my father was of a cheerful and humorous disposition. This spirit of a happier vein followed him till the last days of his life. His wit was not of a coarse or vulgar kind, neither did he ever make light of sacred or solemn things. But he always looked at the bright side of things and all the dry matter-of-fact affairs of life had to him a comical side. He laughed heartily at the pure jokes of men at the table and in the harvest field, but he could never see any fun in anything that contained the least bit of smut.

His own wit and humor grew out of his marked originality of thought and observation and consisted chiefly in bringing together things in odd and unheard of relations.

His vocabulary was *sui generis*. He was never at a loss for a word. Coining words was an everyday occurrence with him. He also coined methods of doing things which had a decidedly comical aspect to others.

On returning from college for a summer's work on the farm I was awakened early by my father one morning (he was always the first one up in the morning) calling me to arise at once for there was very important business on hand that day. As I stepped out into the back yard I was surprised to see the large applebutter kettle filled with long hickory withs boiling away and my father hastening to bring more fuel. "What now?" I asked, and without turning around to look at the inquirer my father replied, "Come on now! Here goes for yoking hogs!" I soon found that the wire fences no longer furnished an obstacle between the *suidae* and the neighboring garden and my father had planned a strategic movement to stop the invasion. That day a boy thirteen years old and myself caught and held forty-five rollicking shoats while my father bound around their necks those hickory withs, joining the two ends at the top in the form of a yoke with each end projecting about two feet above the hog's neck. This exercise was quite a diversion from digging out Greek roots and delivering orations, but we laughed enough that day to get our livers in working order for several weeks. And the project was quite successful for as the swine, possessed of an evil spirit, would endeavor to creep between the strands of wire in the fence the yoke prongs above would be stayed by the top wire and mister Hog would have to withdraw his advances. There was philosophy in the pro-

ject but not much poetry. If the reader had seen that drove of yoked hogs meandering about over the pasture like so many miniture Texas steers you would join with us in hearty laughter and an appreciation of our father's originality and humor.

Then you ought to have heard the old man sing. Religious songs, temperance songs, original songs! He sang at the family altar. He sang at the anvil while his swinging hammer kept time to the tune. He sang all day long in the field as the team went up and down the long furrows. He sang at church with the congregation the song that best set forth the doctrine of his sermon. He sang at the bedside of the sick and the dying. He sang as if he expected to see the incoming of the great millennium or the hosts of the white robed throng coming to carry him over Jordan. There was spirit in his song. There was inspiration of that old fashioned, stirring sort in his song. There was the joy of faith and hope and victory in his song. If he could not find in hymnody a song to voice the sentiment of his heart; he would go into his study, sit down to the desk that he had made, fill his fountain pen with a contrivance of his own, open a self made book and compose a song which in doctrine, spirit and wording as well as meter would compare very favorable with the verses of Wesley, Toplady or Watts, but which suited his purpose better.

During the last few years of his life as his health began to fail he spent his time on the farm doing odd jobs of carpentering, feeding the domestic animals and answering many calls to lecture on temperance, preach funerals and perform the wedding ceremony. Outside the

Lutheran preacher at the county seat, Hillsboro, I feel safe in saying that my father married more couples and buried more dead than any pastor in Montgomery county.

Much of his labor was not only *gratis* but thanklessly received. I would not say that this was because of ingratitude of the people. Ignorance or thoughtlessness would be better words to use in this relation. But there is no question that my father was grossly imposed upon all his life. Yet in the communities in which he lived there is not a name which stands higher for honesty and christian character than his. He had his enemies but they were enemies of truth and reform. These he would far rather have designated as enemies than as friends.

After all his battles of life, he no doubt, looks down from his home in heaven and says with Paul, "I have fought a good fight. I have kept the faith. I have finished my course. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, etc."

There came a time of joy mingled with sorrow in the year 1898 when we gathered together in the old home-joy at the coming of the golden wedding anniversary of our esteemed parents—sorrow because of the failing health of father and the thought that we would never meet again in this world. Our life long friend Rev. M. Rhodes D. D. of St. Louis met with us. A week of service in the home church which was participated in by Dr. Rhodes, brother J. M. Cromer of Kansas City, Mo., Rev. W. Habey and the writer, will be remembered so long as we live. Father preached in this series of meetings to the largest audience and with his usual force and earnestness. But we all realized that

the time of his departure was at hand. This celebration was in January. The following summer he made a trip to the northwest where he visited a daughter, Mrs. S. M. Ladd, in Sheldon, Iowa, and the youngest daughter, Mrs. George Nelson, in Hartington, Nebraska. He enjoyed this trip beyond his power of description. In August the writer came home from his charge in Emporia, Kansas, to spend a short vacation with his lonely parents on the farm. Father took his bed shortly after our arrival. Congestion of the stomach and liver were the principle enemies preying upon his physical body. For four long weeks he suffered untold agony but absolutely refused opiates. The hero of so many battles was not afraid to meet, unarmed, the last enemy--Death.

Cold water baths which we daily administered relieved him more than any temporal remedy we could command. Another life long friend, Dr. T. J. Whitten, stood by him to the last. Many trips from Nokomis, ten miles distant, did this faithful friend make bringing medical aid and deepest sympathy to the home. My father was the doctor's spiritual advisor for many years and his beneficiary always. Often in speaking of the kindness of this friend, father's eyes would fill with tears as he would say over and over to himself, "Yes, Dr. Whitten is a friend of mine--a friend of mine." To this doctor the writer is indebted for his own life. (We leave this item to another biographer.)

One time near the approach of death we ventured to consult with him who had made the valley of death bright for many souls, concerning the prospects for eternity.

"Do you think you are going to get well of this sickness?" I asked. "No!" was the prompt reply. "How long do you think it will be for you upon earth?" "Only a few days," he responded as promptly. "Are you afraid to die?" again I asked. Whereupon my father rose on his pillow and looked me square in the face with something of rebuke in his expression and frankly, positively responded, "Why, no! What is there to be afraid of?" Death was to him an expected enemy who had to be met, fought and vanquished in the same coolness and deliberation as his so-called "whisky devils" he had met all along the journey of his earthly pilgrimage. Though threatened for some time, death came to our father when we were not expecting it. Scarcely could we make brothers and sisters believe the end was near. Brother J. Monroe of Kansas City got home on the day of my father's death. Again our friend Dr. Rhodes came to our help. It was on the 26th day of August, 1898, that the spirit of father took its flight far above all the ills and sorrows and enemies of earth to its home in heaven. Because of the intense heat and the poor facilities for embalming in the village as well as for the reason that the morrow was Saturday, the only time before the following Monday that Dr. Rhodes could leave his work, father's earthly remains were laid to rest on Saturday, August 27, 1898.

The text chosen for the funeral sermon by Dr. Rhodes was Acts 11;24, "For he was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith and much people was added unto the Lord." In his straight forward manner, without fulsome flattery, the doctor showed how applicable Paul's

testimony concerning Barnabas was to our father. The neighbors were there and bowed assent to every word that fell from the doctor's lips. What more—what better could be said of anyone? Though my father was uneducated in the schools, thrown in obscure fields of service, taking no part in the blare of the world's trumpets he has left in the imperishable stones of christian character and the lives of men and women converted to christianity a monument that shall stand through all eternity.

Of my father's six brothers and four sisters four are with him in the glory world, Jacob, Josiah, Margaret Cosley, Elizabeth Baker and Mary Mowery. George Cromer, a farmer near Ft. Loudan, Pa., Fred, a retired fruit farmer in Muncie, Ind., Andrew Jackson, a retired Lutheran minister in Lena, Ill., and Mrs. Hannah Beard, the wife of a retired farmer in Clear Spring, Maryland, survive him. At the time of writing mother still lives at the age of 71 and bids fair to live for many years. God grant it. Two daughters, Mary Margaret an infant, and Clara Bell, a bright girl of fifteen preceeded father to our long home. The surviving children are James Monroe, a Lutheran minister of Kansas City, Mo.; John Birt, a telegraph operator of Rantoul, Kansas; Richard Lawrence, a day laborer of Witt, Ill.; Mrs. S. M. Ladd, the wife of a supreme judge in Sheldon, Iowa; Edward Porter, a school teacher of Gering, Neb.; Mrs. Thomas Wiley, the wife of a stock raiser near Irving, Ill.; the writer, pastor of a Lutheran church in Louisville, Kentucky, and Mrs. Effie Nelson, the wife of an editor of Hartington, Neb.

Whatever we may amount to in the way of doing

good in this world will depend largely upon the influence of christian parents in the home. It was my father's ambition that his children all "turn out good and do some good in the world." He did not care whether we gained a high position upon the ladder of fame or not but he wanted us to do some good. At the time of the dedication of the First Lutheran church of Kansas City which was served by brother J. M. for fifteen years, my father took me aside and said: "George, I want to live to see you build such a church then I will be ready to go home." He did not live to see that day but if the Lord spares life and gives us the strength and opportunity we promise as a debt of gratitude to our father as well as a duty to God and our fellowmen to build up as many churches as possible.

Among the many tributes paid to him Dr. Rhodes adds this testimony to my father's worth, "His natural gifts were more than ordinary and his consecration and devoutness were unquestioned. Like Barnabas he was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and through his instrumentality many people were added unto the Lord. He was a humble, obscure minister but I have a feeling that he will take his place above many who were supposed to surpass him here. There were some things he could not, would not attempt to do but he was mighty in the knowledge of the scripture and in prayer. Beyond his knowledge he impressed and was a blessing to the speaker and to many who knew him."—M. Rhodes.

The religious training we received from him is the best equipment we have in the glorious work of the gos-

pel ministry. Father always began the day with prayer and the reading of the bible. He was never too busy for that. The harvest might stand beneath the threatening clouds a half hour longer and the harvesters might get a later start in the field than those of the neighbors but he must have family worship.

In the framing of business plans and the solving of financial problems of the home my mother was superior to my father. If she had been allowed to have her way about things, it might have been better for our temporal good. But my father thought more about that better part chosen by Mary of old than he did about the affairs of the world. I do not say that my mother lacked that better part. She stood right beside father all the way through. It is a point in her favor when we say that she watched as well as prayed. Father trusted all to the Lord and the honesty of men. In the latter his confidence was often misplaced. But the Lord cared for us all.

And now we come to say farewell forever on earth to him whom we shall forever honor. A simple block of granite marks his last resting place in the old Bald Hill cemetery at Irving, Ill., beside the dust of sister Clara. His name and years and the text of his funeral sermon are inscribed on the monument above his head. Peace to his ashes and rest to his immortal soul.

Here his noble dust is laid,
Underneath the autumn leaves
Of the melancholy trees
In the cool and silent shade.

Flowers blossom where he sleeps
And the robin sings his song—
Sings so sweetly all day long;
Though the rain cloud gently weeps.

Cast a rose bud on his grave
As you, heedless, pass along
With the busy anxious throng.
Thoughtless of the truly brave.

If your life was somewhat blest
By the ever open hand
Of this tenderhearted man;
Drop a tear upon his breast.

Let the help he hath bestowed
So inspire your heart with love.
So reveal the Christ above.
That you'll share your fellow's load.

To his ashes speak sweet peace:
To his errors close your eyes:
To his spirit in the skies
Whisper peace, just peace, sweet peace.

In loving memory,

His unworthy son,

GEORGE C. CROMER,

1514 Story Ave., Louisville, Kentucky.

November 7, 1902.





Mary E. Cronner

The Old Home

Yes, I came through the open gate.

That swings out by the railroad bridge.

And again through the willows great.

I ascended the garden ridge:

But my heart beat so strangely fast.

As I came to the old front door

Of my home in the distant past.

For alas! it is home no more.

The great centerpiece hangs as true

From the ceiling so clean and white.

And the woodwork seems just as new,

And the paper as clean and bright

As they seemed in the long ago.

When in childhood I scanned them o'er;

But how sad! When I came to know.

It was not in the same place of yore.

Yes, I stood in the orchard old.

In the shade of the wide spread trees.

And I took of its fruit of gold.

As it swung in the evening breeze:

But the taste of that fruit was wild

And my palate seemed strangely dry:

For the sweet of that fruit so mild.

With the years had passed sadly by.

Then I drank of the well again.

Which in youth often quenched my thirst.

Purest drink ever quaffed by men—

Other draughts, let them be accursed!

But a tear in that nectar rare.

Made a salt of the crystal wine.

As I thought that again I ne'er

Could recall that glad youth of mine.

Then away to the arbor shade.

Where the grapes in ripe clusters hung—

Richest fruit that our God e'er made—

Choicest food for the human tongue:

But the taste of that fruit was sour
And the sun was so hot that day:
For the shade of my childhood bower
Had been stolen from me away.

So I turned from the old homestead,
With a faltering step and slow:
For quite low drooped my heart and head
And my sadness you'll never know.
A sharp arrow had pierced my soul
And my heart that was sick and sore,
With the thought that while ages roll,
This is home to me nevermore.

Then I looked toward the open sky,
Far above that dear childhood home.
And afar in the heavens high,
Where immortals shall never roam.
There I saw through the mist of tears,
A new home on the other shore.
Where the wear and the woe of years
Are unheard of forever more.

From that home of eternal day,
Where the soul is at last in rest,
Not a child shall attempt to stray
North or south or the east or west;
But with God and our loved ones there,
We shall sing and rejoice and pray—
In a home ever new and fair,
We shall live and shall love alway.

—G. C. C.



Tribute to My Father

BY E. P. CROMER, GERING, NEB.

Whenever I think of father, he is associated with his well-worn bible. Although thirty years have intervened, passages remembered from my boyhood are frequently brought to my mind, with a meaning which I never knew they possessed. The chapters seemed long to me then and little did I realize the impressions being formed on my plastic mind. Often since those bygone days I have thanked my God for the biblical instruction gained through the persistence of my father in reading the Word.

All I am and all I have of spiritual wealth I owe to my father and mother in that they started me right, and I have builded upon that foundation.

A little incident serves to illustrate father's confidence in human nature. He once owned a choice brood mare and was bartered for a trade. The man used such art as horse traders do, in a way that was about to entrap my father. At my first opportunity I told father that the man was trying to beat him. "Oh," says father, "he wouldn't do that, would he?" Being so honest himself, he thought everyone else the same.

I learned to detest the liquor traffic through my father's strong sentiments against this evil. The temperance songs of his own composition and his many lectures on that subject seemed to me to be par excellence. Even to this day I wonder how men can become so depraved as to enter the places where liquor is sold.

Tribute in Memory of My Father

"Some feelings are to mortals given,
With less of earth in them than heaven;
And if there be a human tear
From passion's dross refined and clear:
A tear so limpid and so meek,
It would not stain an angel's cheek,
'Tis that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head."

—*Lady of the Lake.*

My father's prayers and tears, his sympathy and interest in my gaining an education, his solicitations for my general welfare, his kindness and approval in things that were vital to me—his precept and example have been an inspiration and undergirding that have accompanied and sustained me all along life's pathway. They have given me strength, comfort and wisdom as nothing else save the revelation of Christ to my soul. I deem it a precious privilege to lay this flower of gratitude and appreciation upon his honored grave.

EMMA. C. LADD.



[A facsimile of one of Rev. J. B. Cromer's original songs, taken from his own hand-made song book, showing the style of penmanship in which nearly all of his sermons, songs and lectures were printed.]

Oh Tell it wherever you go.

*The Saviour has died to redeem us
From sin and iniquity too
He labored and suffered in anguish
Oh tell it wherever you go.*

CHO. Oh tell it wherever you go.

yes Tell it wherever you go.

*The saviour has died to redeem us
I'll tell it wherever I go.*

*Gethsemane was the damp garden
The scene of his unexpressed woe.
For prayer to his Father in Heaven,
To save him from suffering so*
CHO. Oh Tell—

*But now to the Cross he is taken
Spikes driven in his hands & his feet,
Suspended between Earth & Heaven
His mission of love to complete*
CHO. Oh Tell it

His life for my ransom is given,
His blood for poor sinners did flow.
That they may be saved in sweet heav'n
Oh tell, wherever you go.

CHO.- Oh tell it...

Death, hell, and the grave did he conq.
And over them triumphant reign.
In Christ can my soul have an anchor.
Oh go and repeat it again

CHO. Oh tell.

Oh tell it to Saint & to Sinner
'That Jesus hath done all things well
And he who is faithful is winner
Of all that was lost when man fell

CHO. Oh tell it...

Sermon Siftings

We need prayer like that of Daniel that will give lions the lockjaw.

In woman is found the most perfect examples of unselfish devotion, both to kindred and to Christian causes.

God did not prepare hell for man, but man prepares himself for hell.

Had we the strength of Sampson and the years of Methuselah we could not ward off the death angel.

Anti-temperance church members say they are not going to mix their politics with their religion. No! no! pray, don't! but mix your religion with your politics.

The lack of power to comprehend God demonstrates that man is finite, God infinite.

Opinion should be made to harmonize with the bible rather than to attempt to make the bible harmonize with opinion.

The church tries to make men in the image of God; the saloon, in the image of the devil.

A man floating down stream need not do anything to cause his destruction. Just neglect to do something and he is gone. Sins of omission are as great as sins of commission.

There is only one way to run the liquor business respectably, that is run the liquor into the gutter and the business into the ground.

My Father's Songs---A Rêverie

BY MRS. EFFIE CROMER NELSON.

Sometimes in silent, mystic eventide,

A dream that thrills my heart appears to me,
And visions of the old home sanctified

By forms of loved ones gone before, I see
And revel in the realms of memory.

There, freed from labors which to-day belong,
By the warm fireside glow now restfully,

My sainted father sits—I hear his song
Rising in measure full, harmonious and strong.

Yet not alone at evening hour I hear

My father's voice in soulful song resound,
For oft, e'er break of day, in accents clear,

The harmony reverberated 'round
As if new joys with the new day were found.

If at the glowing forge his strength he bent,
The hammer-stroke accompanied joyful sound—

Those ringing notes to him more pleasure lent
Than well-trained orchestra to master's ear ere sent.

At anvil, desk or busied in the field—

(For plowman, poet, preacher, smith was he
That from his various labors there might yield

A sustenance for a large family—

Like Paul, he'd "Chargeable to no man be")

Still would his soul rise on the wings of song
With every noble cause in sympathy;

He strove for right, he execrated wrong
Which often to weak human polices belong.

Though every aim and intent high and pure

He'd aid with true and never-flagging zeal,
As ardent speech and song sought to secure

Unto his fellow-men their highest weal,
The love of Christ he yearned most to reveal.

And so he did in sacred song excel,
And none but could the holy influence feel

As on God's love for guilty man he'd dwell,
And in sweet melody "The Old, Old Story" tell.
In reverent strains he hymned his Maker's praise,
In melody, but yet in simplest guise,
For heart and soul were in the holy lays
That then on rapturous wings to heaven arise
To mingle with the music of the skys.
In joyous mood with royal bard of old
He sang "Praise to the Lord" in joyful wise
And with Isaiah—prophet, rapt and bold
God's wondrous works and ways and promises, retold.
But if, perchance, bowed down by weight of woe,
His soul to Heaven's King for mercy pleads
With plaintive Job, in minor key and low,
He sang the hymn expressing best his needs
Resolved to follow where his Master leads.
Like Jacob, too, he wrestled with the Lord
Until, like him, in struggling he succeeds,
'Til comfort, sacred promises afford
And long for blessings to his hungry soul assured.
And thus we learned to know his every mood—
The battles fought, the victories he gained,
If shadows dark his stony path pursued,
Or holy angels had his soul sustained,
Until his weary spirit peace attained.
O sacred songs, to hallowed memory dear!
O'er all my life your influence be retained—
Whose gladness bade farewell to every fear,
Whose sadness served but to the Lord to draw more near!
And shall I ne'er more see my father's face,
And shall I hear his well-loved voice no more,
Or know again a father's kind embrace,
Receive his welcome at the old home door
And join in sweet communion as of yore?
Not so, sad heart, faith grants a happier choice;
He waits to welcome on a brighter shore,
And there I'll see his face—I'll hear his voice
In songs of endless praise and victory rejoice.

The Cromer Reunion

(From The Lutheran Observer, November 4, 1887.)

Back in Franklin county, Pennsylvania, nearly three-quarters of a century ago, George and Mary Cromer set out together upon the voyage of life. To bless the union thus formed and to add to their domestic joys, there was born unto them a large family of children, eight of whom are now living. The careful teaching and training given by those Pennsylvania parents has borne fruit in the good citizenship exemplified in the surviving children. The parents have long since gone to their rewards, and it is rather remarkable that eight children, surviving them and scattered throughout the country, should meet as they have done within the past week in an affectionate reunion. More than a week ago the representatives of this family began arriving, and have since been entertained at Cross Roads, Delaware county, Ind., by Josiah Cromer, the resident brother, by his children and neighbors. Scarcely a day has elapsed since they arrived, that they have not been all together, and their associations have been the most pleasant imaginable. The surviving members of this family who have enjoyed this reunion are George Cromer, Ft. Loudon, Pa., age 69; Jacob Cromer, Aurora, Ills., age 67; Fred Cromer, Pomona, Cal., age 64; Josiah Cromer, Cross Roads, and John B. Cromer, Irving, Ills., (twin brothers), age 62; A. J. Cromer, Lena, Ills., age 60; Jere Cromer, Hagerstown, Md., age 57; Mrs. Hannah Beard, Clear Spring, Md., age 55. Mr. Ben F. Beard, the husband of Mrs. Beard, was in attendance upon the reunion,

as were also the wives of all the brothers except Mrs. Jere Cromer, who was kept at home and deprived of the pleasures of this meeting by reason of bodily affliction.

It is impossible to describe this reunion as it is enjoyed by this family. The bond of affection, which united them so fondly about their mother's knee, seems never to have been broken, but rather to have grown stronger as time and circumstances drifted them geographically father apart. In their conversations they talked together as they did when in the old homestead. The lessons there taught them have not been forgotten, but have been of invaluable aid to them in the duties of busy and useful lives. Notwithstanding every day of the past week has been one of continuous round of enjoyment, wherein the ties of brotherly love have been strengthened. Tuesday of this week was set apart as the *great* day. On this occasion the brothers and sister, with their companions, met at the home of Josiah Cromer, where the day was spent in feasting and rejoicing together. To them it was "a great day," as it was also to the numerous other guests present, among whom were Miss Betty Cromer, from Xenia, O., daughter of Jere; Miss Emma, daughter of A. J. Cromer, of Lena, Ills.; Mrs. Mollie Newberry, of Irving, Ill., daughter of Jacob Cromer, and all the living members except one of Josiah Cromer's family, with grand-children and neighbors, making a total of about sixty persons. It is impossible to do justice or even attempt to describe the feast spread upon this occasion. It was in keeping with the event which was celebrated about it, and to understand and appreciate the luxuries of the

table was impossible unless they were partaken of. Dinner over, the day was spent in conversation and music, and here was an occurrence of a nature rather unusual. These brothers and sister sang for their own pleasure and for the entertainment of the younger people around them, songs which they had learned and sung together in their old Pennsylvania home—songs which they had not sung together for forty years. Without book or note they sang the words and tunes more readily than if they had but learned them yesterday. It was indeed a pleasant sight to see these old pioneers—none less than a half century old,—and all having been very hard workers during their lives—join together in these songs, with a spirit and vigor that would put to shame the attempts made by younger people of today. Never having forgotten nor neglected the moral and religious lessons taught them at home, these people sing and pray, laugh and weep together—all in perfect sympathy with each other.

This reunion certainly marks an event to be remembered as one of the happiest in their lives. As they meet bearing the most fond regard and affection each for the other, another very peculiar thing about these people is, that they represent four different religious denominations, and yet there was not a jar in their religious deliberations, and to seal, as it were, their philanthropic spirit they, as true christians, communed together around the Lord's table. They do emphatically represent true christian *union*. This is more than a reproof to selfish, narrow contracted sectarianism. As they meet bearing the most fond regard and affection each for the other, so will they

part—and sad that parting must be, in view of the very strong probability that they will never all be permitted to again meet as upon this occasion.

The reunion has been a feast to the people of Cross Roads. Each evening at the neat brick church they assemble and participate in divine service. Three of the Cromer brothers are ministers, and they, with Rev. J. C. Cromer, of Ft. Wayne, have assisted Rev. Simon in the ministerial work during the week. To them this has been a season of joy. Every member of the family is a good singer—far above the average—and when their voices are united with all parts represented they produce excellent music. They together “sing with the spirit and with the understanding also,” as but few persons nowadays. So warm an attachment for each other do these people have, that it is next to impossible during this reunion to keep them apart any length of time. One could not endure the idea of being sent alone to spend the night with a neighbor, he must always be accompanied by a brother or sister.

All the Cromer brothers and sister attended the Salem Township Sunday School Convention at “White Oak” school house. They sang one of their old-time songs quite to the satisfaction of the audience. It is said they sang with such impressiveness as to move many of their auditors to tears. As they separate and return to their homes, may grace and peace follow them, and by and by may each one of them enjoy a final reunion in heaven. Amen.

The Golden Wedding

"Who soweth good shall surely reap;
The year grows rich as it groweth old,
And life's latest sands are its sands of gold!"

On January 7th the home of Rev. and Mrs. J. B. Cromer was made the scene of joy and great blessing—this being their fiftieth wedding anniversary.

Early in the history of American Lutheranism Rev. and Mrs. Cromer came to the frontier states of Indiana and Illinois and devoted the best part of their lives to the cause of our church here. Many sacrifices were made and victories won which are known only to these faithful servants and the Master they served. Now in the decline of their years we join in the song of the Psalmist, "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth."

The children and many friends of Father and Mother Cromer were present to share with them the joys of the occasion experienced by few. It was not a complete family reunion owing to the necessary absence of Prof. E. P. Cromer, of Nebraska, and Mrs. Judge Ladd of Iowa. Dr. M. Rhodes, of St. Louis, who is a warm friend of the family, was present in the home and in the evening of Friday preached an able and appropriate sermon at Irving, Ill., in the home church. On Saturday evening Rev. J. M. Cromer (one of the children who has been for thirteen years pastor of the Lutheran church of Kansas City, Mo.,) preached in this church home which was the scene of his early Christian experiences.

On Sunday morning a union service was held in the

Methodist church, where Rev. G. C. Cromer (the youngest son in the family, who is now pastor of St. Mark's Lutheran church, Emporia, Kansas,) preached to an attentive audience. On Sunday evening Father Cromer preached in the Lutheran church from the fourth chapter of Exodus. Though he is now in his seventy-second year, he preached with remarkable force and effect.

The public services of the week were closed Monday evening by Rev. J. M. Cromer with his "Ben Hur" lecture, which has been so well received by our churches for nearly one hundred times. Large and attentive audiences attended all of these services and showed by their words as well as by their presence their appreciation of this rare event.

There are eight children of this family now living to perpetuate the good influence of their worthy parents. Two are Lutheran ministers; one, the wife of a supreme judge in Iowa; one, an editor's wife; one, a telegraph operator; one, a school teacher; and two are industrious farmers.

Father and Mother Cromer gave to their children the best legacy that comes to the children of men—an industrious, christian character. The children showed their parental love by a liberal offering of gold on the anniversary day and still show loyalty to their parents in untiring efforts to comfort them in this time of old age. May God bless the parents and children of this family and may the memories of this golden wedding strengthen the cords of love which draw all of God's children toward that Eternal City of Gold!

W. M. HABEY.

Character Sketch

"The only conclusive evidence of a man's sincerity is that he gives himself for a principle. Words, money, all things else are comparatively easy to give away; but when a man makes a gift of his *daily life* and *practice*, it is plain that the *truth*, whatever it may be, has *taken possession* of him."—*Lowell*.

I have been urged to collect and publish this memorial of our father by an ever present pressing conviction that so marked a character, so devout a life should have more than a passing notice.

The plain granite slab that marks his resting place seems inadequate to express our affection and gratitude, our appreciation of him, who has so richly endowed us by heredity with christian sentiments, and who has left us so worthy an example of Godly living. As I grow older and learn more of the world, my estimate of his character continually increases. Rarely do we find men with the strength of purpose, the purity of mind and heart, the uncompromising devotion to principle and the unswerving faith in God that were characteristic of him.

He was a strong man as the patriarchs and apostles were strong. "This one thing I do"—serve God, be bold for righteousness in the home, in the community and in the world at large, was his motto. He sought "First the Kingdom of Heaven," believing all things else would be added. He was the embodiment of simplicity, sincerity and honesty. He was earnest and true. Everybody always knew where to find him on all moral and religious questions. With him there was "no variableness, neither

shadow of turning." His countenance bespoke the purity of his mind and heart. The illumination of his soul lit up his face with a grace and beauty noticeable to every one with whom he might converse on themes of reform and religion.

"His life consisted not in the abundance of the things he possessed," but he was as happy and independent as a king, monarch of all he surveyed in his inner life of buoyancy and hope, of joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. He would go about his daily tasks singing, cheerful and contented, at peace with God and all the world. He lived such a life of guilelessness that no occasion for remorse was found in him. His open mindedness and cheer inspired life with radiant hopefulness. He was an inspiration to all who knew him to live a pure and upright life. His environments were such as would have deterred many men from attempting any kind of public service. He had a limited education, a large family, little means and not as much sympathy from us all as he might have had, had we realized more at that time his real endowments. But the fountain within would burst forth in spite of the rocks and debris, the obstacles without. It was with him as with Paul, and he often said it, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." He knew how to reach the throne in prayer. His testimony was, "He that believeth me the Son of God hath the witness in himself." He believed that revelation is the basis of spiritual life. He had a "know so" experience, and preached with a consciousness of the Divine presence. Christ within, the way, the truth and the life lifted him above the trials and besetments of

the earthly life. In the words of Lowell, "He kept his eye upon the fixed stars, those beacons lighted on the eternal promontory of heaven, above the stir and shifting of your lower system."

He had that humility which one must have to get in touch with God. He knew, too, the lowliness of mind and heart that attends the revelation of God to the soul. He knew the effect of the presence of the Heavenly Guest as expressed by the monk in the "Legend Beautiful:"

"Who am I that thou deignst
To reveal thyself to me?
Who am I, that from the centre
Of thy glory thou shouldst enter
This poor cell, my guest to be."

He had a lofty soul inbreathed by the Divine Spirit.

This was the secret of his life of purity, unselfishness, humility and zealous service for the Master. It was this inwrought conviction of Divine truth that made him a power for righteousness; it was this that gave him universal confidence and esteem. He was an exemplification of these beautiful lines:

"Thou must be true thyself
If thou the truth would teach:
Thy soul must overflow if thou
Another's soul would reach.
It needs the overflowing heart
To give the lips full speech."

He had a message and it was his joy to tell it whenever and wherever he had opportunity. Among the songs of his own composition is one entitled, "Oh, Tell It Wherever You Go," found elsewhere in this book, which is the old, old story of Jesus and His love.

He was an intense and enthusiastic man. He was persuasive and invincible in what he believed to be the truth. Under the pressure of deep conviction of right he would seem sometimes to be inspired and would proclaim such truth with eloquence, force and power.

He was a fearless abolitionist, an uncompromising prohibitionist, heartily in favor of the equality of women, always interested in the extension of Christ's Kingdom every way and everywhere. A few weeks before he died, when he was in poor health, he said to me, "My! my! how I would like to live to see the results of the war with Cuba and the Philippines. Why," said he, "that means an open bible to the world." When I read of the scores of teachers and missionaries that are now landing on these far off isles, I feel the force of his zeal and the truth of his prophesy, and believe he is still watching and exulting over the changing scenes toward righteousness universal, from the other side of the river that separates time and eternity.

His kindness, his unselfishness, his interest in reforms, his public spirit, his progressive and evangelistic nature kept him always interesting, ever active and ready to "cry aloud and spare not," even after the close of his regular ministry. On one occasion when he was hardly able to stand without support he insisted upon filling a date to lecture on prohibition. When the committee met him he looked so pale and weak they insisted on his giving it up, saying they were afraid he would break down in the attempt. He lamented this disappointment as long as he lived.

He was not faultless, but blameless in a remarkable degree, for he meant all for good, even though sometimes severe. He believed "to spare the rod was to spoil the child." He believed in ruling his children rather than have them rule him. Whatever his methods, he succeeded in maintaining the respect and admiration of his children all his life, and now they rise up and call him "blessed."

His industry and mechanical ingenuity are testified to by the many garden tools and culinary utensils that were found in our home. Whether a bookcase, a buggy or a song book, he enjoyed them all the more that they were his own handiwork. His sermons were often composed in the shop or in the field as he labored with his hands. We could often hear him in his shop preaching and pounding at the same time. He was "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit serving the Lord." He was not an ordinary man. His originality, his many peculiar traits, his paramount desire, energy and activities for good gave him distinction, and had he had the advantages he so much craved, he would have been widely known. He had many of the traits of genius which, I believe, means and culture would have developed into a life more noted. He could not have been a better man had he lived a larger life. If education would have drifted him from the source of his power, or dimmed the diamond of his religious instincts and attainment, he was more of a success in his natural state as the unhewn rock. Too much polish often hews off the sharp corners of truth. Often rehetoric oratory and the invention of a gospel are substituted for the gos-

pel we already have. In his preaching he was experimental, not theoretical. His was not an historic faith, but a present reality. He believed that "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

Communion with God, through a living Christ, was his message. A now salvation by faith and the witness of the Spirit, was the gospel he preached. He was evangelistic and unsectarian. I have been in his meetings when the people were praying and shouting all over the house. Although a Lutheran, he never liked to hear Luther exalted, but rather the truth that made Luther what he was. He was at home in any orthodox pulpit. He was often invited to preach in other denominations, and to address children. His great delight was to talk to children. Many young people now grown to manhood and womanhood remember the impressions made upon them in his children's meetings by his songs and his peculiar method of telling bible stories. The story of Daniel and the Hebrew children were arranged in verse and song. Jacob's ladder was drawn on a large chart and made as real as life. While singing a song, "To Walk Around the Golden Streets," he would have the children march all around the church singing these words over and over as they marched. His sermons and lectures were never written out; he spoke from a carefully printed outline. I regret that I have neither sermon or lecture in full to place in this book.

His life was a grand success just as it was. He

loved to live, although to many it might have seemed life did not offer him much. His enjoyment was independent of material environments. His realm was not bounded by things of sense. All the possibilities of soul were his. The universe was his habitation. He was never despondent, except when his labors for the sustenance of the family conflicted with the purpose of his life—prevented him from preaching the gospel.

His life was worth living had he never extended his labors outside the family altar. The influence of these devotions is an inspiration today in the lives and homes of the eight children who survive him, and was the means, more than any other agency, of giving our dear, deceased sister, Clara, a secure and happy entrance into the land of eternal rest. No business was ever so pressing as to cause him to neglect family worship before the day's labor, and seldom was he too weary to close the day with a song and prayer. Those songs seemed to be a part of him and will never, never be forgotten. When I hear them or see them in print I am ever reminded of the old home, and seem to hear him sing them as in the days that are gone.

Sunday morning after reading the scriptures and before prayer, he would sing, we children joining him:—

“Welcome sweet day of rest
That saw the Lord arise;
Welcome to this reviving breast
And these rejoicing eyes.”

As I write these words I can recall every accent, and the tone of his voice which was clear and sweet on every

syllable. Another of these doubly sacred songs often comes to me in the day, and sometimes in the night—

“Time is winging us away
To our eternal home;
Life is but a winter's day,
A journey to the tomb.”

Not long since I was awakened one morning by seeming to hear, from the other world, my father singing these lines. They were more impressive even than when I really heard them in the old home; although it was the same voice with the same inflection I seemed to hear, it was so affective as it seemed wafted from the skies. It was a benediction to me the whole day, making the spirit land where our loved ones dwell seem so near.

At evening when we had all gathered about the fire-side soon we would hear father begin singing this song—

“The day is past and gone,
The evening shades appear;
O, may we all remember well
The night of death draws near.”

This song often comes to me at the close of the day; rings down through memory's halls like a bell calling to prayer—an angel messenger awaiting the soul's response in gratitude and praise to Him who guards and keeps; a beautiful testimony to the never dying influence of sacred song and prayer in the home; a cherished visitant ever recalling the faithful devotion of a sainted father.

“O, come, angel band, come and around me stand,” and “My days are gliding swiftly by,” and many other such songs are immortalized to us by this association.

These songs seem to belong to him, because we always remember them as he sang them. He was a sweet singer, loved music, and had his own song book in which he copied favorite songs and printed some of his own compositions.

Family worship, I believe, has more influence in the formation of christian character than all else beside, save the transforming power of the Spirit itself. It is an inspiration and culture which no other place or manner of worship can supply, and without which the religious system is lame and incomplete. It is the home life which impresses itself most upon the immediate members of the home, and it is this that best garrisons the soul for life's conflicts, and best reflects the true character of the individual.

The cords of father's public and private life were tuned to the same key, and vibrated the one harmonious note of Godliness and zeal in his service. The influence and example of his life impressed upon the minds and hearts of his children and all who knew him, is a monument more to be coveted than the proudest peaks of marble—an heritage more enduring and valuable than large estate, worldly fame or grand achievement. "If we work upon marble it will perish; if we work upon brass, time will efface it; if we rear costly temples they will crumble to dust; but if we work upon immortal minds, if we imbue them with lofty principles, with the just fear of God, we engrave on the tablets something which will brighten to all eternity."

May the record of the life and labor of this simple,

earnest and faithful child of God, fill each heart with radiant hopefulness, teach the important lesson that life is what we make it; that we have it in our reach to grasp God's best, to live a life of sunshine in a dark and foreboding world and that no environment need quell the soul aspiring to divinest heights. Undaunted by manifold adverse conditions he marched cheerfully, triumphantly on, his lofty soul ever bouyant and bidding defiance to things material to conquer the King's son, "who is all glorious within."

EMMA CROMER LADD.

Sheldon, Iowa, Dec. 29, 1902.



A Visit to the Old Home

[The following article was written by George C. Cromer while on a visit to Irving, the town near which the Cromer family lived nearly forty years.]

IRVING.

Home! The deserted village—deserted by our fathers and mothers who have left with their children for other homes or for the Home where no ties are broken—deserted by scores of youth who have found their way through college walls and trades and arts to places of usefulness and honor in the great, wide world—deserted (thank God) by the saloons and vices that are now undermining the very foundations of our larger cities—deserted *never* by our memory and our prayers. Here was our home. Here is the orchard, the meadow, the old oaken bucket, the maple grove, the grape arbor, the beaten path to the public school, the garden, the field. Oh what memories of the past! The joys and sorrows, the gains and losses, the smiles and tears of the days gone by! “How sadly sweet is the dream of home—the dream of home. When far o’er the land or the sea we roam!”

TWO GRAVES.

Here lies the dust of our sister, the first to break the family circle—a bright girl of 15 summers, gone to join the children of the King in that land of perpetual spring. And here the dust of our aged, sainted father. Peace to his ashes! Rest to his weary hand and heart! Life to his immortal soul! Fifty years in the home, forty-five

years in the gospel ministry, the father of a large family, an honest man who feared God and was respected by all who knew him—gone to his reward! What a record! May we prove worthy of his good name!

A NEW HOME.

But half a mile from the old homestead and in sight of the village is our resting place for a "fortnight away." The sister whose special care in the old home was to minister to our temporal wants is seated here with an honest farmer whose name in the village and country is a household treasure. God has sent three little girls into this new home. Here again is to be repeated the great drama of human life. A new home in sight of the old one! Oh what a thought! It means that we all are here in the old world but for a little while. Here we dwell for a season together. Here we toil and plan and hope and rejoice and mourn. But we are making ready for a new home. In sight of the old home and in sound of the cries that ascend from the parental roof is our new home. It is a home where only the bright side of life is flashed upon the happy inhabitants—a Home where neither pain, nor tears, nor sorrow, nor death, nor parting can ever enter—a Home where, through all eternity we may drink from the crystal fountain, where the family altar is never broken down—a Home where we rest, not for a fortnight, from the fatigue of life, but for ages of ages—a Home of rest and worship. May our heavenly Father bring us all safely to that new Home!

Sermon Siftings

Did the church do her whole duty there would be no demand for the various charitable and philanthropic organizations outside the church.

We must sing with grace in the heart if we would keep the jealousy out of the heart, so prevalent among singers.

Spiritual songs have done more toward uniting Christendom than any other one thing.

It has been my highest aim in my labors among you to have each one develop his talents, make progress in the Divine life, press forward toward the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus.

Will name, form, baptism, the Lord's supper, creed, will any or all of these give life, eternal life? Christ in you is the only hope of glory.

Morality cannot give life, spiritual life, nor forgive sins.

I know I shall meet my mother there. Shall I meet all those to whom I have preached and for whom I have prayed? Shall I meet my children there?

Character is conduct. Time and eternity one.

The devil whispers in the ear of the church man telling him the liquor traffic is a political question, and at the same time tells the politician it is a moral question, ever crying as of old, "Let us alone."

The government is guarding the rebel's property by accepting license money from the liquor traffic. Not until Lincoln removed the Union guards from rebel property did the war go on aggressively and to final triumph.

The church is giving very little light now, she is passing through an eclipse. The light of the Holy Spirit is being extinguished by formality, worldliness and spiritual deadness.

Christ has but one flock, one kindred, they all go one way into the one rest prepared for the finally faithful.

The Gospel is the power of God, not of eloquence—not of the many devices of man—but the power of God unto salvation.

Local option is one dry town surrounded by ten wet ones. State prohibition is a rock in a sea of rum. National prohibition is the only solution of the liquor problem.

Boats loaded with heavy timber sometimes become water-logged and move very slowly and seem sometimes almost to sink. Lot got water-logged down at Sodom. So is the christian weighed down by worldiness. Let him be like the man in the balloon, who wishing to go up higher throws out ballast, if he would rise higher in the divine life.

Men may reject Christ now, but they will have a never ending eternity of repenting.

The last trump shall sound as surely as did the flood come upon the earth, though none believed but Noah, a preacher of righteousness.

No wonder young people are so hard to reach, when parents neglect to dedicate them to the Lord in their infancy, and think they must wait until they are grown up before they should become members of the church.

The bible is precious to saints, because they believe it and obey it.

Do you know, experimentally, what it is to be full of glory? I am glad to say that in this beautiful sanctuary as well as in many other places, your unworthy servant has been overflowing with joy, unspeakable and full of glory.

Talk about Alexander the Great, making the world tremble with his armies. Here is Paul, the tent maker, who makes the world tremble without an army. The streams of grace that Paul set running are running still. Eighteen hundred years have passed since he wrote his epistles, but their fruits are going up from every clime and nation.

After all, all that a man is really worth is what he has laid up in heaven. Our loved ones die, money may fail us and reputation be swept away. Seek those things which are above and that last through eternity.

If our treasures are in heaven our hearts will be there, then we may rejoice and be exceedingly glad for great is our reward in heaven. Dear brethren, let us be diligent and persevering in the cause of our Master, and by and by we "shall meet beyond the river where the surges cease to roll."

Shall we meet each other there.

1. Shall we meet beyond the river,
Where the surges cease to roll?
Where in all the bright for ever,
Sorrow ne'er shall press the soul?
Shall we meet, Shall we meet,
Shall we meet each other there?
Shall we meet beyond the river?
Shall we meet each other there?

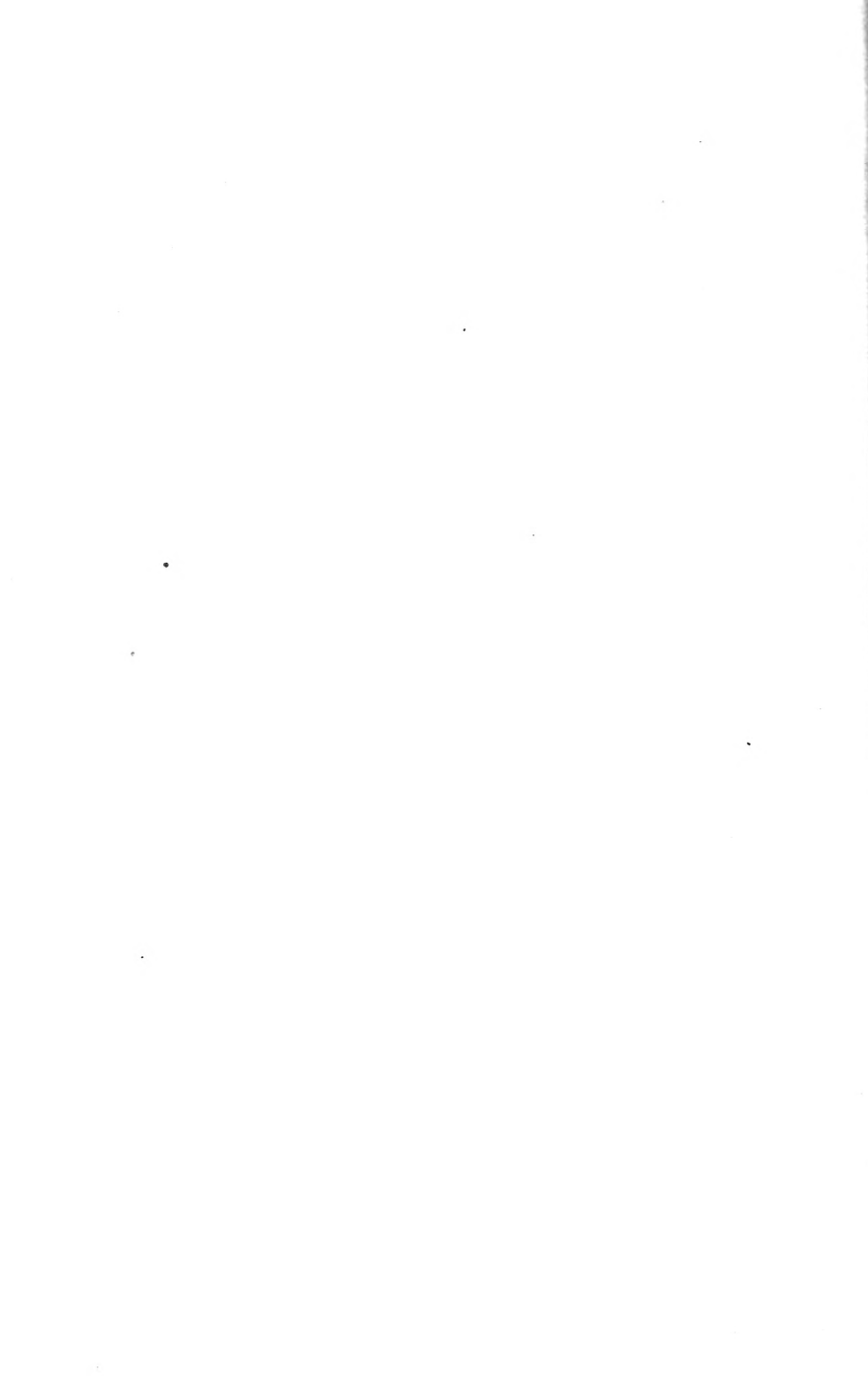
2. Shall we meet in that hest harbor?
When our stormy voyage is o'er?
Shall we meet and cast the anchor?
By the fair celestial Shore,
Shall we meet,
Where the music of ^{the} ransomed,
Rolls in harmony around,
And creation swells the Chorus
With its sweet melodious sound.
Shall we meet.

one,
Shall we meet with many a loved
Torn on earth from our embrace,
Shall we listen to their voices,
And behold them face to face?
Chorus.

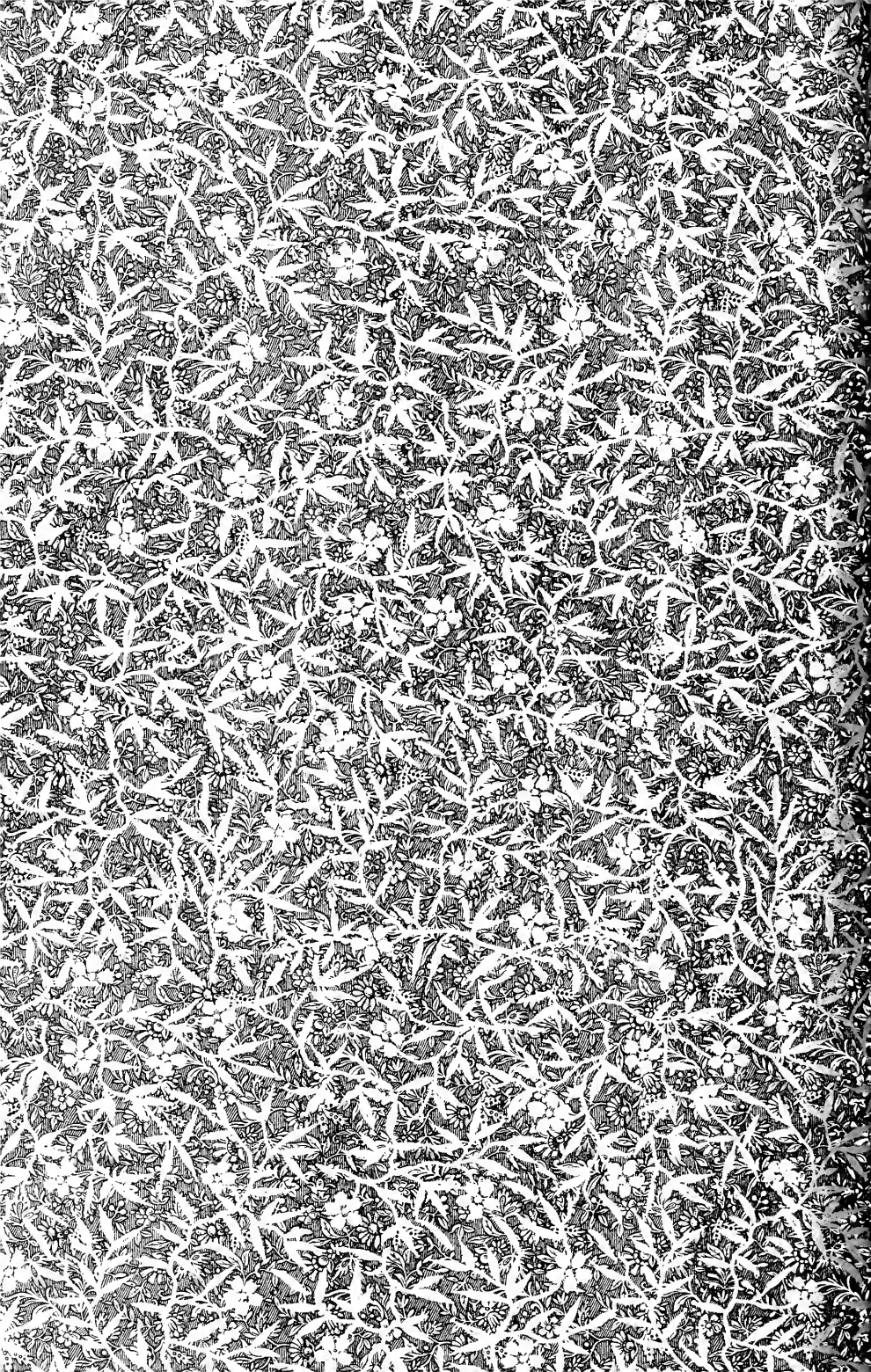
meet
Shall we with Christ our saviour,
When he comes to claim his own,
Shall we hear him bid us welcome.
And sit down upon his throne,
Shall we meet,

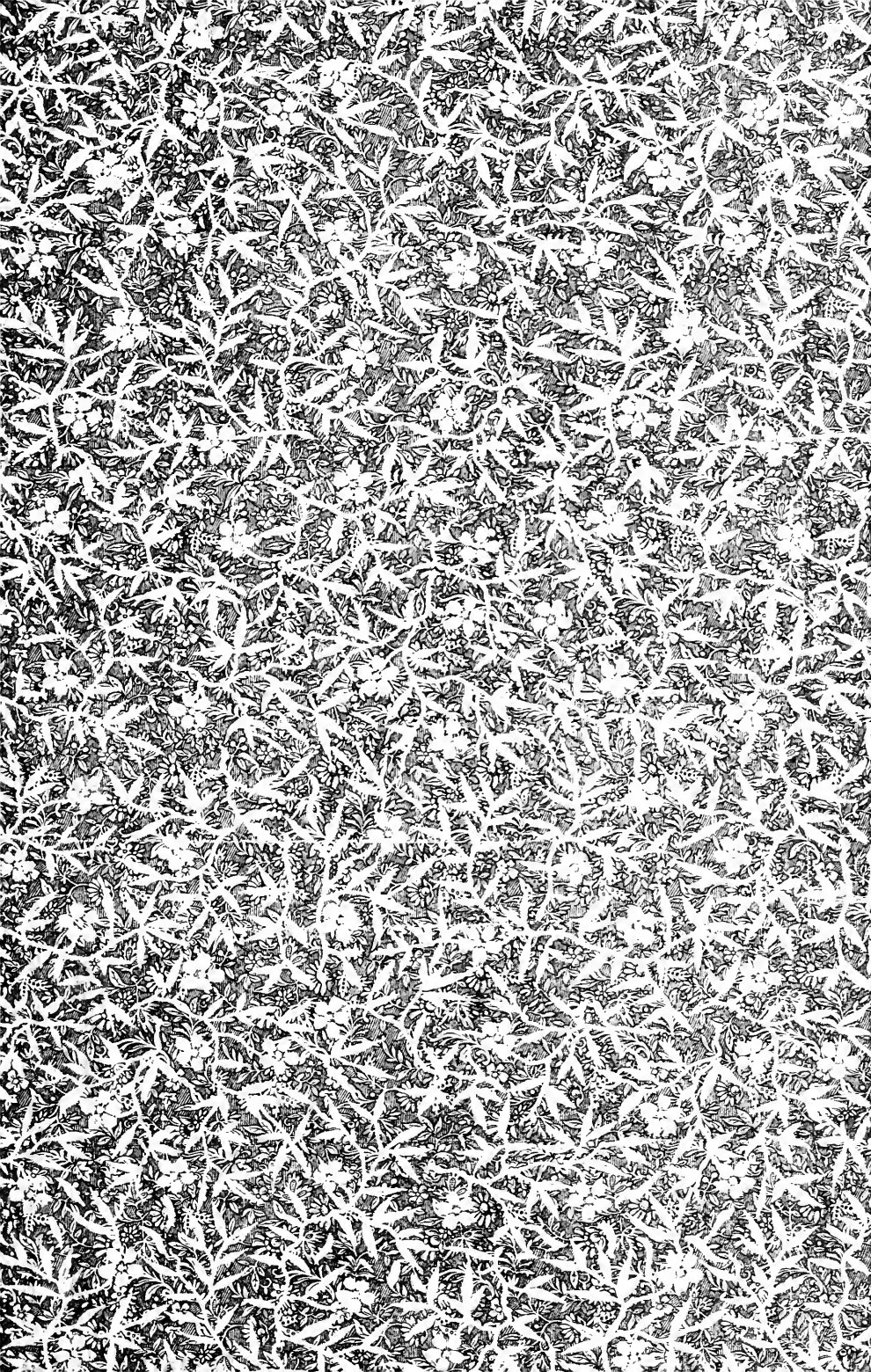
[A facsimile of a song, thrice sacred to the surviving members of the family. It was one of father's favorites; was sung by sister Clara a few days before she entered the life beyond, and is in itself a fitting finish to a work of this kind.]





“Yes, we’ll meet our loved and lost ones
When the surges cease to roll;
Sin and death, and every evil,
Then shall yield to Christ’s control.”





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